

South Devon College Courses & Learning

South West Energy Centre, training for a bright future in the Low Carbon Sector

Section 1 About the project

Summary

South West Energy Centre is a unique multi award winning facility Providing advice, guidance and training to industry and consumers in all matters relating to the Low Carbon Sector. The centre has developed a wide range of courses under the "EnviroSkills" banner to meet the educational demands of industry and consumers.

Project partners

South Devon College is the lead delivery partner working with the Project Advisory Group. Key project members include; Devon & Cornwall Business Council, SW LEP; Schneider, Worcester Bosch, Rational Windows, TÜV SÜD and Sunfarming. Also involved are public sector representatives from Regen SW, Torbay Development Agency, The Energy Savings Trust and the Green Tourist Business Scheme. The main funding has come from the Skills Funding Agency, European Regional Development Fund, the Regional Growth Fund and South Devon College investment.

Section 2 The results

The project *(it wasn't really a problem!)*

Having identified a gap in the market for training in Renewable Technologies in the South West region, South Devon College developed the idea of an Energy Centre. The outcome of that idea is South West Energy Centre (SWEC).

The approach

- The SWEC team are able to offer a broad range of training courses, including full time EnviroSkills training, apprenticeships, and short courses and bespoke training packages.
- A minimum of 12 hours support (currently fully funded) for businesses or community groups.
- SWEC delivers a range of services and resources such as: Specialist Business Mentors, an Innovation Zone for Low Carbon business start-up, Research & Development facilities, a nationally recognised unique Demonstration and Training Passivhaus delivering guidance and advice on energy efficient homes and advice and guidance for Homeowners.



**South West
Energy Centre**

Profile

- 500 HE students & 11,500 FE students
- 12,000 students (3,000 full time)
- 776 staff (650 FTE)
- Urban

Finalist's case study

Our goals

- To train the next generation of engineers equipping them with the skills required to work on the major projects planned over the next 10 years in the local area, such as Hinkley Point C, Smart Metering as well as various, smaller off-shore and on shore renewable projects.
- To provide short courses to train and re-train individuals helping reduce unemployment in the area while meeting the skills shortage in the sector.
- To work with a minimum of 200 SMEs and 1,500 consumers to provide advice and guidance in relation to diversification into the Low Carbon Sector.
- The creation and development of a hub where consumers can visit and receive advice, education and get hands-on with the renewable technologies on display.

Obstacles and solutions

Obstacles	Solutions
Engaging businesses and meeting their training needs.	A dedicated business engagement team is in place to identify training needs and respond accordingly. A course co-ordinator and supporting admin team are also in place to ensure the smooth running of the courses.
Developing short courses that are valuable to the sector.	We gather evaluative feedback following all courses and make relevant changes. We also actively seek input and suggestions from industry through various forums and seminars.
Engaging businesses and community groups and providing support for all matters relating to the Low Carbon Sector.	A dedicated business and community engagement team are in place who all have a wealth of experience in Renewable Technologies and the Low Carbon Sector. This team is supported by qualified, skilled Technical Advisors.
Developing the centre to meet business, community and homeowner requirements.	The centre openly invites suggestions for improvements from all visitors and ensures that feedback is gathered following all events and tours. A Welcome Host is in post to oversee the Welcome Zone and gather and implement this type of feedback.

Performance and results

- 342 businesses have been supported to date (3 to 40 hours of business support).
- Over 350 individuals have received training in the Low Carbon Sector to date.
- 62 Full time learners in 2013/14 and 2014/15.
- 15 South Devon High School Learners studying Eco Technologies in 2014/15

Section 3 The future

Lessons learned

One size does not fit all, but if you're reactive and do what industry and community groups want and need, success is within your grasp.

Sharing our project

Senior Management at South West Energy Centre delivered a presentation at the AoC Sustainability Annual Conference outlining how South West Energy Centre has driven change in the local community and technology

Finalist's case study

sectors. South Devon College openly invites other institutions, companies and training providers to share best practice as this can be a mutually beneficial undertaking where companies can learn from each other.

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

Being shortlisted for the Green Gown Award for Courses and Learning at South West Energy Centre is fantastic; a huge accolade and recognises the hard work and dedication which has been put in to designing an inspirational industry and community-led curriculum surrounding Renewable Technologies and the Low Carbon Sector. We are delighted to be shortlisted against such high profile institutions and are looking forward to the Awards Ceremony.

Further information

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